Deliberations of the Fifth World Environment Congress

764. SHRI RAJUBHAI A. PARMAR:
SHRIMATI VEENA VERMA:
SHRI SUSHILKUMAR SAMBHAJIRAO SHINDE:

Will the Minister of ENVIRONMENT AND FORESTS be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government's attention has been drawn to the deliberations of the Fifth World Environment Congress held in New Delhi in December, 1996;

(b) if so, the main observations and suggestions made therein, for containing and curbing pollution in Indian cities and the rivers; and

(c) whether the Congress observed that over a hundred of cities on the banks of Ganga are without sewage treatment plants; if so, the steps contemplated to provide sewage treatment arrangements for such cities?

THE MINISTER OF ENVIRONMENT AND FORESTS (PROF. SAIFUDDIN SOZ): (a) No information is available with Government on the Fifth World Environment Congress held in New Delhi in December 1996.

(b) & (c) Does not arise. However, under the Ganga Action Plan and the National River Conservation Plan pollution abatement works, which include sewage treatment arrangements in most of the towns, have been sanctioned for 74 towns along the banks of the Ganga.

Introduction of Electric Rickshaws to Contain Urban Pollution

765. SHRIMATI MALTI SHARMA:
SHRI RAJ NATH SINGH:
PROF. RAM KAPSE:

Will the Minister of ENVIRONMENT AND FORESTS be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government's attention has been drawn to the news-item captioned "An electrifying solution to Urban Pollution" appearing in the Economic Times (Mumbai edition) dated 23rd December, 1996; and

(b) if so, the measures proposed to be taken to encourage introduction of electric rickshaws?

THE MINISTER OF ENVIRONMENT AND FORESTS (PROF. SAIFUDDIN SOZ): (a) Yes, Sir.

(b) The Government has a policy for encouraging the use of cleaner vehicles. A number of fiscal incentives are being provided for operation and promotion of electric vehicles.

"Expert Panel to Ascertain Causes of Deforestation in the North-East"

766. SHRI SANATAN BISI: Will the Minister of ENVIRONMENT AND FORESTS be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that Government have constituted an expert panel to ascertain causes of loss of forest cover in the North-East; and

(b) if so, the details thereof?

THE MINISTER OF ENVIRONMENT AND FORESTS (PROF. SAIFUDDIN SOZ): (a) and (b) The Central Government has constituted an Expert Committee for an in-depth analysis of issues impacting on conservation of forest resources in the North Eastern States under the Chairmanship of Former Secretary, Ministry of Environment & Forests, Govt. of India, Shri R. Rajamani. The other members of the Committee are: (1) Shri M.F. Ahmed, Former Inspector General of Forests & Special Secretary, Ministry of Environment & Forests, (2) Prof. B. Pakim, Vice-Chancellor, North-East Hill University, Shillong, (3) Secretary, North-East Council, Shillong, (4) Joint Secretary (North-East), Ministry of Home Affairs, & (5) Shri A. K. Mukherjee, Former Inspector General of Forests, Ministry of Environment & Forests. Shri S.C. Dey, Additional Inspector General of Forests, Ministry of Environment & Forests is the Member

Secretary of the Committee. The Committee has been given three months time for submission of report.

"Dumping of Toxic Industrial Waste in the Country"

767. DR. D. VENKATESHWAR RAO: Will the Minister of ENVIRONMENT AND FORESTS be pleased to state:

(a) whether some Swedish companies are being investigated by authorities for allegedly dumping of toxic industrial waste in India;

(b) if so, whether there are two parallel official enquiries are underway; and

(c) if so, the action proposed to be taken by Government to meet the threat of dumping waste in India by some of the foreign countries?

THE MINISTER OF ENVIRONMENT AND FORESTS (PROF. SAIFUDDIN SOZ): (a) No, Sir.

(b) and (c) Does not arise.

News Item Captioned '78 Trees Axed in Hauz Khas'

768. SHRI O.P. KOHLI: Will the Minister of ENVIRONMENT AND FORESTS be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government attention has been drawn to the news report appearing in the "The Times of India" dated January 6, 1997, under the caption "78 trees axed in Hauz Khas";

(b) if so, whether it is against the Government's declared policy not to fell trees;

(c) if so, how the DDA's Horiticulture Department authorised a private contractor to fell 78 trees in the Rose Garden in Hauz Khas, and that too for a sum of Rs. 3500/- whereas their real worth is reported to be a minimum of Rs. 1.56 lakh;

(d) whether Government have taken any action against the DDA officials guilty of this serious crime; and

(e) if not, the reasons therefor?

THE MINISTER OF ENVIRONMENT AND FORESTS (PROF. SAIFUDDIN SOZ): (a) Yes Sir.

(b) Yes, Sir Felling of trees is not permissible without prior permission under "Delhi Tree preservation Act, 1994".

(c) to (e) DDA (Horticulture) has not obtained prior permission of the Tree Officer for the felling of trees under the "Delhi Tree Preservation Act, 1994". Forest Department, Government of NCT Delhi has asked DDA to identify the officials responsible for illicit fellings so that they can be proceeded against under the "Delhi Tree Preservation Act, 1994". According to the report of Conservator of Forest Delhi, the sum of Rs. 3500/- appears to be much less than the real worth of the felled trees. Meanwhile, World Wide Fund for Nature—India has filed a writ petition in Delhi High Court against DDA for unauthorised felling of trees in which Forest Department NCT Delhi has also been impleaded.

Animals in Zoos Suffering from Various Diseases

769. SHRIMATI ANANDIBEN JETHABHAI PATEL:
SHRI KRISHNA KUMAR BIRLA:

Will the Minister of ENVIRONMENT AND FORESTS be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government have made any study to know about the animals including endangered species, suffering from various diseases in the zoos in the country and the extent to which the zoos are lacking in providing treatment to the suffering animals;

(b) if so, the percentage of the zoo animals suffering from various diseases and the nature of such diseases;